



## NEWS RELEASE

### Media Contact:

Paul Eakins  
Public Information Officer  
213-257-2000  
[PEakins@da.lacounty.gov](mailto:PEakins@da.lacounty.gov)  
Twitter: @LADAOoffice

Sept. 30, 2019

## Trio Charged in Lottery Scam Targeting Elderly Long Beach Woman

Three people were charged today with using a lottery scam to steal cash from a 66-year-old woman last week in Long Beach, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Mercedes Montanez (dob 5/29/51), Luisa Camargo (dob 4/21/81) and Tito Lozada (dob 2/2/70) all are charged in case BA481471 with one felony count each of grand theft from an elder and grand theft of more than \$950.

Arraignment is scheduled for this afternoon in Department 30 of the Foltz Criminal Justice Center.

On Sept. 26, Montanez allegedly approached the victim on a street in Long Beach and claimed that she had a winning lottery ticket, but needed to pay \$15,000 to collect the winnings, according to Deputy District Attorney Elena Abramson of the Elder Abuse Section. Montanez allegedly asked the victim to help pay the fee in return for a portion of the lottery proceeds.

To convince the woman, Camargo is accused of pretending to be another person contributing to the lottery fund. Lozada allegedly posed as a lottery official who validated the ticket.

The defendants are accused of taking the defendant to her Long Beach home and a local bank to retrieve more than \$1,800 before dropping her off at a location where she was to await further instructions.

Police officers who observed the suspicious activity arrested the trio later that day.

The defendants face a possible maximum sentence of four years in state prison if convicted as charged.

The prosecutor is recommending that bail be set at \$250,000 each.

The case remains under investigation by the Los Angeles Police Department's Commercial Crimes Division, Major Theft Task Force.

## **About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office**

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.